

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 EB-11

AID-20 OMB-01 RSR-01 /122 W
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R 241800Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2731

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KINGSTON 2882/1

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT PFOR JM

SUBJECT: SIMILIARITIES BETWEEN T&T POLITICAL SITUATION AND
JAMAICA'S

REF: PORT OF SPAIN 1008

BEGIN SUMMARY: THERE ARE SUPERFICIAL ELEMENTS OF SIMI-
LARITY BETWEEN CURRENT SITUATION IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO
AND JAMAICA, ESPECIALLY INCREASING VIOLENCE, AND ALSO
TENSION BETWEEN THE ARMY AND POLICE FORCES. ON BALANCE,
HOWEVER, THE MISSION BELIEVES ELEMENTS OF STRENGTH IN
JAMAICAN SCENE CONTINUE SIGNIFICANTLY TO OUTWEIGH ELEMENTS
OF WEAKNESS. END SUMMARY

2. WE HAVE STUDIED REFTTEL WITH INTEREST. BECAUSE THERE
ARE ELEMENTS OF AT LEAST SUPERFICIAL SIMILARITY BETWEEN
TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO AND JAMAICA, DEPARTMENT MAY BE
INTERESTED IN A SIMILAR ANALYSIS ON LOCAL SCENE.

2. MOST IMMEDIATE POINT OF APPARENT SIMILARITY IS TENSION
BETWEEN MILITARY AND POLICE. JAMAICA HAS A HISTORY OF
MILITARY/POLICE RIVALRY GOING BACK TO COLONIAL TIMES.

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RIVALRIES HAVE INCLUDED OCCASIONAL ISOLATED ACTS OF

VIOLENCE, BUT LAST WEEK'S WIDESPREAD OUTBREAKS ARE UNPRECEDENTED IN RECENT TIMES. THE INCIDENTS SHOCKED THE PUBLIC AND CAUSED GRAVE CONCERN IN THE GOVERNMENT, WHICH MOVED SWIFTLY TO CONTROL THE SITUATION. DISCIPLINE APPEARS NOW TO HAVE BEEN RESTABLISHED

3. SERIOUS THOUGH LAST WEEK'S OUTBREAKS OF VIOLENCE BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND THE POLICE WERE, HOWEVER, TENSIONS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN CONFINED TO THE LOWEST ENLISTED AND NON-COMMISSIONED RANKS, ESPECIALLY IN THE ARMY, AND DO NOT REFLECT DEEP-SEATED INSTITUTIONAL RIVALRIES. WE HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO DISCOVER ANY EVIDENCE OF POLITICAL MOTIVATION, BLACK POWER OR OTHERWISE, IN THE INCIDENTS. ROOT CAUSES ARE NOT CLEAR. JOINT ARMY/POLICE OPERATIONS IN RESPONSE TO CURRENT CRIME WAVE ARE ONE FACTOR. THESE OPERATIONS REQUIRE SOLDIERS TO PERFORM IN A ROLE FOR WHICH THEY HAVE NOT BEEN TRAINED, AND UNDER THE CONTROL OF POLICE. A MORE DISTANT CAUSE MAY BE THE INCREASINGLY CIVILIAN AND PROFESSIONAL CHARACTER OF THE POLICE, FORMERLY A PARA-MILITARY FORCE. THE EVOLUTION OF THE POLICE, PARTLY AS A RESULT OF U.S. INFLUENCE THROUGH THE PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM, HAS EMPHASIZED ITS DIFFERENCES FROM ARMY AND MAY HAVE LEFT THE LATTER IN SOME DOUBT AS TO ITS OWN MISSION, IMPORTANCE, AND FUTURE

4. WIDESPREAD CRIME AND BANDITRY ARE ANOTHER POINT OF SUPERFICIAL SIMILARITY WITH TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO. SCARCELY A DAY PASSES WITHOUT A MAJOR BANK OR HOTEL ROBBERY IN KINGSTON, AND CASES OF ASSAULT AND RAPE, INCLUDING SOME ON FOREIGN TOURISTS, ARE SO FREQUENT THAT EVEN THE YELLOW PRESS HAS DIFFICULTY IN KEEPING UP WITH THEM. INCIDENTS OF RURAL BANDITRY ARE ON THE INCREASE, AND AT LEAST ONE BAND IS APPARENTLY OPERATING WITH A SUB-MACHINE GUN STOLEN FROM THE ARMY. GUNS ARE A PRIME OBJECTIVE OF BOTH URBAN THUGS AND RURAL BANDITS AND ARE PREFERRED TO MONEY OR JEWELS IN THIS COUNTRY WHERE THEY ARE RELATIVELY SCARCE AND TIGHTLY CONTROLLED. HOWEVER, WE HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO FIND ANY TRACE OF POLITICAL MOTIVATION IN RECENT ACTS OF VIOLENCE,

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-43 7049953\$ -,\$ 7, 3TTLED, AND WHERE MISERY IS FAIRLY WIDESPREAD, BUT IT HAS NOT HAPPENED YET.

5. WHEN LOOKING AT THE BROADER POLITICAL PICTURE, HOWEVER, THE SIMILARITY ENDS. THE MANLEY GOVERNMENT IS NOT IN A TWILIGHT PERIOD. ON THE CONTRARY, IT STANDS IN THE FULL LIGHT OF MORNING DESPITE THE SERIOUS CHALLENGES IT FACES.

THE PEOPLES NATIONAL PARTY (PNP) WON TWO BI-ELECTIONS HANDILY IN JULY. THIS, PLUS OTHER INDICATORS, SUGGEST THE GOVERNMENT IS AS STRONG AND POPULAR WITH THE MASSES AS WHEN IT ASSUMED POWER 18 MONTHS AGO EVEN IF ITS BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL CLASS BACKERS ARE SOMEWHAT LESS ENTHUSIASTIC THAN BEFORE. SHEARER AND THE JLP ARE VIGOROUS IN THEIR CRITICISM, BUT VERY MUCH WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF THE QUEEN'S LOYAL OPPOSITION. IN SHORT, THE POLITICAL SYSTEM CONTINUES TO BE THE ELEMENT OF STRENGTH IT HAS ALWAYS BEEN.

6. NOT THAT PROBLEMS ARE FAR TO SEEK. SKYROCKETING PRICES FOR FOOD STUFFS AND SOME FOOD SHORTAGES ARE AN INCREASING PROBLEM, ESPECIALLY FOR LOWER INCOME GROUPS. PUBLIC SERVICES ARE STAGGERING UNDER INCREASED PRESSURE FROM POPULATION GROWTH AND MIGRATION. UNEMPLOYMENT, ESPECIALLY AMONG YOUNG ADULTS, RUNS 24 PLUS PERCENT AND IS THE COUNTRY'S MOST CRITICAL PROBLEM IN SHORT RUN. THE ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITIES OF THE GOVERNMENT (NEVER ITS LONG SUIT) AT BOTH THE POLITICAL AND PROFESSIONAL LEVELS HAVE BEEN STRETCHED BEYOND THEIR LIMITS. HOWEVER, GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO END SUBSIDIES ON IMPORTED FOODSTUFFS WAS AN ACT OF CONSIDERABLE ECONOMIC SENSE AND POLITICAL COURAGE, SINCE IT WILL HAVE TO TAKE A LOT OF FLAK BEFORE THE HOPED-FOR INCREASE IN DOMESTIC FOOD SUPPLY OCCURS AS A RESULT. LIKEWISE, THE GOVERNMENT'S BROAD GUAGE ATTACK ON SUCH LONG TERM PROBLEMS AS EDUCATION, LAND USE, AND SO ON, IS ENCOURAGING. ON BALANCE, THE GOVERNMENT IS HARD PRESSED, BUT COPING. HEWITT

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 EB-11

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FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2732

INFO AMEMBASSY PORT OF SPAIN

AMEMBASSY BRIDGETOWN
AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

C O N F I D E N T I A L FINAL SECTION OF 2 KINGSTON 2882

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PFOR JM
SUBJECT: SIMIARITIES BETWEEN T&T POLITICAL
SITUATION AND JAMAICA'S

7. IN FOREIGN POLICY, PRIME MINISTER MANLEY'S TASTE FOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES SHOWS SIGNS OF BECOMING A VICE. HE JUST RETURNED FROM NEARLY TWO WEEKS AT THE COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE AT OTTAWA, AND REPORTEDLY PLANS TO ATTEND THE NON-ALIGNED CONFERENCE AT ALGIERS IN EARLY SEPTEMBER. IT IS ALSO LIKELY THAT HE WILL ATTEND THE UNGA IN NEW YORK. WHILE IT MIGHT BE BETTER FOR JAMAICA TO HAVE HIM IN KINGSTON SWEATING BEHIND A DESK, AN OCCUPATION HE DOESN'T TAKE TO, IT MAY BE TO OUR ADVANTAGE THAT HE ATTEND THESE MEETINGS BECAUSE OF HIS GENERALLY MODERATE POSTURE COMPARED TO SOME THIRD WORLD LEADERS.

8. GOJ'S RECEPTION OF NEW PRC EMBASSY MAY HAVE BEEN SOMEWHAT WARMER THAN THE CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRED, BUT WAS NOT TOTALLY OUT OF LINE WITH WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN OFFERED TO ANY NEW REPRESENTATION. THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN SOME CRITICISM IN THE PRESS AND ELSEWHERE FOR THE CORDIALITY WITH WHICH THE CHINESE HAVE BEEN RECEIVED, AND ALSO THE
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NUMBER OF CHINESE IT HAS PRMITTED TO BE ASSIGNED TO PRC EMBASSY. HOWEVER CORDIAL THE JAMAICAN WELCOME OF THE PRC REPRESENTATIVES HAS BEEN, PRIME MINISTER MANLEY IS QUITE AWARE THAT THE PRC BEARS WATCHING AND HAS INSTRUCTED THE SPECIAL BRANCH OF THE POLICE TO KEEP A STEADY EYE ON THEIR ACTIVITIES. JAMAICA REMAINS COMMITTTED TO AN EXCHANGE OF AMBASSADORS WITH CUBA, BUT IS APPARENTLY IN NO HURRY TO ACCOMPLISH IT. IT IS ALSO APPARENTLY IN NO HURRY TO EXPAND ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL ARRANGEMENTS WITH CUBA. HEWITT

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